

Kentucky will add tests in reading and mathematics

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

Spurred by requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the Kentucky Board of Education adopted at its October meeting new mathematics and reading tests for Kentucky elementary and middle school students by 2006. The new testing schedule helps the state education system comply with the federal requirement to test mathematics and reading in grades 3 (end of primary) through 8 each year.

Several months ago, the board had hoped for a waiver from the federal government that would allow Kentucky to continue using its already rigorous testing schedule. The state now tests students in reading and mathematics, using a norm-referenced test, at the end of primary and in 6th grade. Schools use the Kentucky Core Content Tests in 4th and 7th grades to assess reading and in 5th and 8th grades to assess mathematics. Federal officials told the board they wouldn't grant Kentucky a waiver on the annual tests.

The board adopted a plan that calls for students from the end of primary through 8th grade to take norm-referenced tests in reading and mathematics, augmented by two open-response questions. These questions would cover Kentucky core content that is not covered by the norm-referenced tests. Members of the national technical panel that advises the board on testing issues said it might be necessary to add a few multiple-choice questions to ensure content is assessed in every grade.

The new tests would add about 90 minutes to testing time each spring for students in grades 4, 5, 7 and 8. Kentucky students now spend up to

six hours taking the state test during a two-week testing window.

Several tasks must be accomplished before the tests are used in 2006: The new norm-referenced tests must be aligned to Kentucky core content. Standards for student performance must be determined in grades that have not been tested in mathematics or reading. Test questions must be field tested before adding the assessments to the testing system.

(CATS) were developed, said Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit.

Over the next two months, the board also will make decisions on how to comply with other requirements of the federal law before submitting the state's plan by Jan. 31, 2003. Those issues include consequences for low-performing schools.

In other business, the board announced its intent to promulgate regulations that would:

districts greater flexibility in selecting and adopting the most appropriate instructional materials to meet individual student needs;

- establish criteria for designating a course as an Advanced Placement course and provide for an equitable process to give all Kentucky students access to participation in these rigorous courses.

The board has scheduled public hearings for 10 a.m. on Nov. 27 in Frankfort on proposed regulations that would:

- allow the commissioner of education to approve waivers to use limited extended school services funds to provide additional instruction to students during the regular school day;

- establish guidelines for awarding high school diplomas to honorably discharged veterans of World War II;

- update pupil transportation guidelines for local districts and the Department of Education.

For more information about these proposed regulations and amendments, go to www.kentuckyschools.org/legal/regs/default.asp. Individuals interested in speaking at the public hearing on Nov. 27 must contact the office of Kevin Noland, deputy commissioner, within five working days of the hearing. Written comments also can be submitted for the record. Noland's address is Department of Education, 500 Mero St., First Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601. The phone number is (502) 564-4474. The fax number is (502) 564-9321.



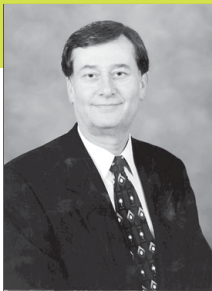
Photo by Rick McComb

Becoming Savvy Voters

Representative Kathy Stein (D - 75th District) and students in Milt Evans' political science class talk about evaluating campaign messages during school elections at Lafayette High School in Fayette County. Stein was taking part in America's Legislators Back to School, an event sponsored each fall by the National Conference of State Legislatures. To learn more about this annual event and view related lesson plans, visit www.ncsl.org/public/backsch.htm online.

The new tests will be developed with input from teachers, administrators and other stakeholders, just as other components of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System

- amend the regulation that provides directions for the review, selection, purchase and replacement of instructional resource materials. Changes in the state law would give



By Gene Wilhoit
Commissioner of Education

Commissioner's Comments

Revisiting Primary

Data and observations show that many schools do not offer opportunities for continuous progress

During the past two years, I have had the opportunity to visit many primary classrooms in elementary schools throughout the state. I have seen some wonderful examples of the primary philosophy: students excited and engaged, eager to share what they are learning, working together in flexible multiage groups, discovering and progressing continuously at their individual rates.

However, I have also observed classrooms that are primary in name only – classrooms where students are not engaged and where instruction is predominantly teacher-directed; where traditional age-driven grouping practices do not allow for the research-supported benefits of a continuous-progress approach to early education.

Adding to my concerns are responses to the 2001-2002 Demographic Survey (the elementary school annual report). An analysis of school-provided data yielded these facts (with my comments added):

- Half of Kentucky's elementary schools have elected to implement the primary program using a traditional kindergarten-through-grade-3 structure. When properly implemented, the primary program does not adhere to placement of students by age and specific grade levels. Teachers organize learning and group their primary stu-

dents according to each student's individual needs and developmental level. Teachers offer opportunities for continuous growth over a period of four years, not on a rigid year-to-year basis.

- The number of students requiring a fifth year at the end of the primary program increased from 4,745 students in 1999-2000 to 5,601 students in 2000-2001. Of greater concern, some schools retain students at pre-KERA grade levels during the first three years of the primary program. "Retaining" before the exit year contradicts what primary is all about. Primary accommodates students who need additional time before moving on to grade 4, but the additional year allotted to those few students with unique learning needs is intended only at the end of primary's fourth or "exit" year. The high number of fifth-year students indicates that many schools are not effectively addressing the concept of continuous progress. Primary students mature and learn at different times and in different ways. Those who are not achieving need and deserve differentiated instructional approaches plus additional supports along the way.

- Survey responses bear witness that educators differ in their perceptions about what "primary" means,

and too few schools implement primary by meeting all of the program's critical attributes, the hallmarks of effective primary education. (See Page 3.)

It is clear that the General Assembly envisioned a research-based approach to continuous progress for young students. Legislators specified the program's seven critical attributes (KRS 156.160) and called for schools to bring all of these attributes together in a comprehensive program.

School councils have the responsibility to develop policy to implement the primary program. A review of council policies indicates that a significant number of schools have no policies or limited policies to address the primary program or the critical attributes. Through KRS 158.031, the General Assembly gave councils flexibility to determine how a school's primary program would be organized and to what extent the program would use multiage groupings to implement the critical attributes. The General Assembly's intent was not that we abandon primary's critical attributes but that the attributes continue to be strategic to the effective implementation of the primary program.

Well-designed and fully implemented primary programs are vital to the success of all students and can

have a significant and positive impact on Kentucky's public education priorities: literacy, closing achievement gaps and increasing the percentage of students who receive a high school diploma.

During the summer, I called on elementary principals, teachers and parents to take a long, hard look at the primary program in their schools. I applaud those who are responding to my plea. I urge all Kentuckians to consider these essential questions: Could the primary program in my local schools be more in line with the critical attributes? Could students benefit from an across-the-board recommitment to primary's vision of continuous progress for each child? Could my local primary programs do more to prepare young students for a lifetime of learning and achievement?

To respond to the commissioner on this or any other topic, phone (502) 564-3141 or send e-mail to gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us.

For more about the primary program, including an instrument for evaluating the level of primary implementation in a classroom or school, see Page 3.

Commissioner of Education Gene Wilhoit
Associate Commissioner Hunt Helm
for Communications
Director Armando Arrastia
Division of Publications and Web Services
Editor Fran Salyers
Copy Writers Joy Barr
Faun S. Fishback
Photographer Rick McComb
Graphics and Design Susie Snodgrass, Manager
Bill Davis
Michael Gray
Brett Hurst



Kentucky Department
of Education

Kentucky Teacher is published by the Kentucky Department of Education for teachers, school administrators, counselors, support staff, parents, students, legislators, community leaders and others with a stake in public education. Please address correspondence to Kentucky Teacher, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; e-mail kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us.

The Kentucky Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. Alternate formats of this publication are available upon request.

Printed with state funds by the Winchester Sun, Winchester, Ky., on recycled paper

ISSN 1526-3584



A Self-Evaluation Checklist

Is your school’s primary program *really* primary?

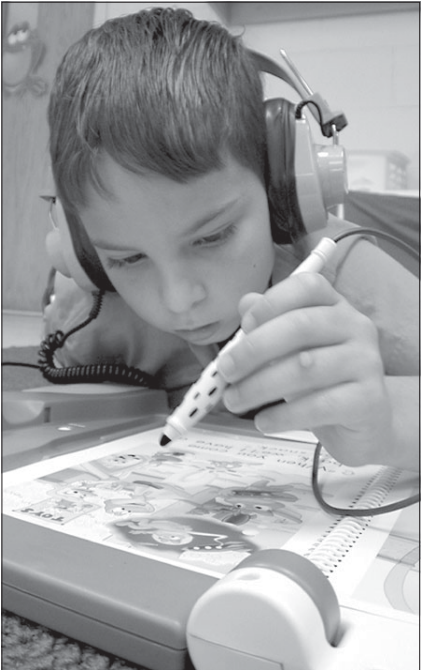
The architects of Kentucky’s primary school program envisioned a school environment that would be developmentally appropriate for young children. The resulting “primary” environment helps young children from age 5 to grade 4 learn and construct knowledge; master language and number literacy; and use their experiences, knowledge and skills to engage in authentic, real-life tasks.

Does your primary classroom measure up to the primary program’s seven critical attributes and their benefits? Use this self-evaluation to determine your level of primary implementation.

1. **Developmentally Appropriate Practices** – teaching children based on their individual readiness for content, skill or instructional approach.
- Children are more engaged and retain more of what they learn.
 - Children are both challenged and given time to practice what they learn as they learn it.
 - Children more readily learn basic skills and how to apply them.
 - The child’s physical, social, intellectual, emotional and aesthetic/artistic needs are addressed.

2. **Continuous Progress** – each child expected and allowed to progress through the program at his/her own pace of learning.
- Students have time to practice.
 - Students have the opportunity to accomplish individually appropriate skills through differentiated instruction.
 - Students are not held back in any area once they master what is taught and are ready to move ahead.
 - Negative emotional effects of retention are avoided.
 - Children are less likely to experience failure or to drop out of school later.

3. **Multiage and Multiability Classrooms** – children grouped for



A-E-I-O-U

Austin Wright, a primary student at Fayette County’s Deep Springs Elementary, uses a Leap Pad to reinforce what he has learned about vowel sounds. He listens as the device “sounds out” letters he selects with an electronic pen.

learning not solely by age but by needs – in flexible groups that may change throughout the school day.

- Younger children stretch academically as they work with older classmates.
- Older children reinforce their own learning when they share what they know with younger children.
- Children show equal or higher levels of achievement, better attitudes toward school, higher self-esteem and a greater desire to learn than students who spend most of their time in groups defined by age or ability.
- Students learn patience and how to deal with others as individuals.

4. **Authentic Assessment** – ongoing documentation of what students learn and do in their day-to-day classroom activities.
- Detailed evidence (teacher’s notes, work samples, reading logs,

completed projects, notes from conferences with parents) documents what children learn and what they can do with what they learn.

- Teachers use this information to plan instruction and learning opportunities appropriate for each student.
- Accurate evidence of a student’s learning over time is recorded.
- Readiness for 4th grade (successful attainment of the six learning goals found in KRS 158.6451) is documented.

5. **Qualitative Reporting** – communicating a child’s progress to the child and to his or her family with a focus on the growth and development of the whole child.

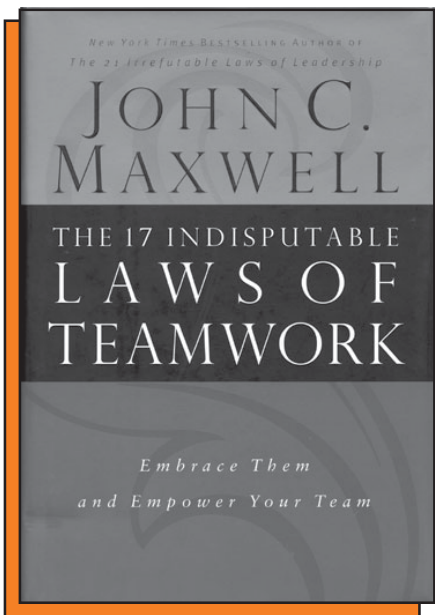
- Parents get specific information about what the child knows, is able to do and is ready to learn next.
- Parents can use information to reinforce the child’s learning at home.
- The reports emphasize each child’s strengths and needs.

6. **Professional Teamwork** – all school staff talking and planning together on a regular basis.
- By problem solving together and sharing professional talents and skills, administrators, teachers, aides and others are able to provide a richer and better learning environment for children.
 - By sharing information about what their students learned last year, teachers working in teams can begin appropriate instruction at the beginning of each new school year.
7. **Positive Parent Involvement** – schools actively seeking to increase parent participation as partners in supporting their child’s learning.
- Children achieve more when parents are involved and better understand how to support at home what a child is learning in school.
 - Children benefit from communication, understanding, trust and exchange of information between the school and home.

Resources

- Does your school’s primary program measure up? Consider the following resources to learn more about the primary philosophy and get assistance in bringing real primary to your students.
- Kentucky Department of Education, Primary Education Branch – www.kentuckyschools.org/osle/extend/default.asp. This Web site includes “Primary 2000,” a document that explores the critical attributes, plus links to dozens of primary-related Web sites.
 - Kentucky’s five Early Childhood Regional Training Centers:
 - Anderson County – jmyers@anderson.k12.ky.us; (502) 839-2513
 - Ashland – lhenson@ashland.k12.ky.us; (606) 327-2706
 - Berea – kchapman@berea.k12.ky.us; (859) 986-1929
 - Calloway County – nancy.lovett@coe.murraystate.edu; (270) 762-5316
 - Simpson County – bporter@simpson.k12.ky.us; (270) 586-2809
 - The eight Department of Education regional service centers. Get contact information at www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/rsc/default.asp.
 - Department of Education consultants Audrey Proctor and Jennifer Baker, both at (502) 564-3064 and on the KETS global e-mail list.
 - Primary reading consultant Felicia Smith and primary writing consultant Sandra Hamon, both at (502) 564-2106 and on the KETS global e-mail list.

Educators review books and journals about the profession



The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork – Embrace Them and Empower Your Team

By John C. Maxwell
Hardcover, 256 pages; Thomas Nelson, publisher; ISBN 0785274340; July 2001

As schools realize the importance of collegial teamwork by groups of teachers, the role of administrative teams and the potential of the Department of Education’s new service teams this book becomes a valuable resource. Maxwell puts into understandable language the laws you can count on when you need people to work together, and he presents those laws in a manner that makes them easy to implement. He illustrates the 17 laws with stories about team lead-

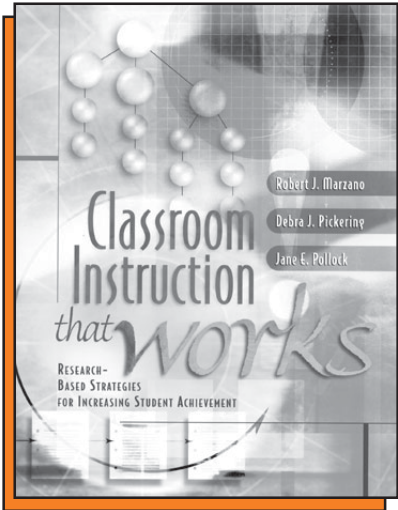
ers and others who paid the price for ignoring the importance of teamwork.

The laws outlined in this book are most easily applied to industry or business, but most are applicable to team building in the education setting as well. I found a good correlation between some of the teamwork laws and several indicators found in Kentucky’s “Standards and Indicators for School Improvement” (www.kentuckyschools.org/olsi/improve/schaudit/tools.asp).

However, if you are looking for research-based leadership skills, you need to find another book. For the most part, Maxwell restates what some may say are obvious facts about groups of people who work together. Still, restating the obvious is sometimes necessary to reinforce ideas in a way that refocuses our efforts in the right direction. Maxwell takes the reader from The Law of Significance through The Law of Dividends, providing time and reason to reflect and improve leadership skills along the way.

Teamwork is and will be an essential part of taking all schools and all students to proficiency, which makes this book a “must read” for present and potential school leaders, including principals, department heads, team leaders, committee chairs, coaches and educators working from the state or regional level to support schools in their improvement efforts.

Submitted by Travis Huber
Highly Skilled Educator



Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement

By Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, Jane E. Pollock
Paperback, 178 pages; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; ISBN 0871205041; January 2001

Note: During an intensive three-week professional development program to prepare for direct assistance to Kentucky schools, state-level educators met in groups to study books about improving public education. The following review came from a member of one of those groups.

With education’s urgency to use “research-based” practice, wouldn’t it be great if a respected writer would gather, organize and summarize some of the important research related to instructional practice? Fortunately, Marzano, Pickering and Pollock have done just that in “Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement.”

For each of nine main areas – Similarities and Differences; Summarizing and Note Taking; Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition; Homework and Practice; Nonlinguistic Representations; Cooperative Learning; Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback; Generating and Testing Hypoth-

eses; and Cues, Questions and Advance Organizers – the authors cite related studies, summarize the data and offer practical classroom suggestions for instruction based on the findings. Most chapters offer both general information for instruction and specific examples of how the strategy might look in the classroom.

This book would be a good beginning point for teachers who want to learn more about research-based practices and how to implement them in the classroom. It would also be a strong choice for a school’s professional library or for a book study group.

Submitted by Stella Crutcher
Consultant, Region 5 Service Center

Read any good books lately?

Has a recent professional development book, journal or online resource impressed you? Let other teachers know about it! Send us your review for possible publication in a future issue of *Kentucky Teacher*.

Please include this information:

- your name, district, school and title plus your e-mail address and phone number in case we need clarification
- the name and publisher (and Web address, if appropriate) of the resource you are reviewing
- a brief description of what the resource offers and why you recommend it – or don’t recommend it
- if you recommend it, for whom? (teachers at certain grade levels? administrators? parents? others?)

E-mail your review to kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us. By submitting it, you are automatically granting permission for possible editing and publication in *Kentucky Teacher*. You will have an opportunity to review any edits before publication.

New online service matches job seekers and job openings in Kentucky public schools

By Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

Think of it as the ultimate online matchmaking service, at least when it comes to careers in education. The Kentucky Department of Education’s new Kentucky Educator Placement Service (KEPS) links job applicants to job vacancies – and vice versa – using a system that is accessible 24-7 and free of charge to all users.

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit said the department launched the service to save educators and school districts time, money and frustration. “This is truly ‘one-stop shopping’ for any educator seeking opportunities and any district or school seeking qualified educators,” Wilhoit said. “I think we might be the first state to make this level of job-matching services accessible to all, free of charge.”

Wilhoit said he also sees the new service as a way to attract more teachers to Kentucky schools and to keep teachers in the state. “We’re making it easier for educators to locate jobs that meet their professional interests, career goals and personal needs,” he said.

Through KEPS, certified teachers, principals and administrators looking for opportunities can:

- locate and explore all vacant positions posted by all participating school districts;
- fill out one online application to be considered for vacancies at all schools in the state;
- use the Job Search Agent feature to receive job opportunity alerts via e-mail;
- customize job searches by geographic location, type of position, content area, grade level, date of availability and other preferences.

Districts looking for job candidates can:

- tap a database of potential job candidates based anywhere in the region, state or nation;

- customize job candidate searches to identify only those applicants with specific training or experience;
- post and update job vacancies quickly;
- make vacancy information accessible to a virtually unlimited pool of potential candidates.

For Educators . . .

For an individual educator, all it takes to use this new tool is going to www.kentuckyschools.org and clicking on “Jobs.” Once at the KEPS page, click on the registration link and follow the prompts to create a password-protected personal listing. By filling in the blanks, the educator composes an online resume of professional training, certifications, experience and job preferences. Once the software has verified the certification information with the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (or with similar agencies in other states, if appropriate), the resume is officially posted and ready to be matched to job vacancies that fit with the teacher’s background and preferences.

“This can be a tremendous help to educators who want to relocate, whether for personal or professional reasons,” said KEPS administrator Darryl Thompson. “The registration and application process takes no more than one hour to complete, and each resume remains on file until the educator removes it. Educators can choose how much information to include, and they can even specify that their names not appear in queries posted by their present employers.”

Educators may edit their online resumes at any time. If an educator does not log on to KEPS for 30 days, his or her resume becomes inactive and is no longer matched with job vacancies. The system reactivates the resume once the educator logs in again.



For Districts . . .

District employees can log on to KEPS using the same process and passwords they use for other Department of Education online services. District personnel or human resources managers can post and edit job vacancy announcements and search for people who qualify to fill those vacancies.

“District staffs can use the KEPS search capabilities in various ways,” Thompson said. “For example, they can search for candidates by name, by certification, by content area or by grade level. They can even produce reports – for example, a report on how many other districts are looking for 8th-grade science teachers, or a report on how many job-seekers are qualified to teach at the primary level.”

Districts may even apply for a waiver to post vacancies that are anticipated but not confirmed, such

as vacancies that are likely to occur because of possible retirements.

Thompson said the free access to KEPS could save money in several districts that are paying as much as \$900 per year to a national, for-profit company for help in finding educators to fill vacancies.

Two former Department of Education online job listings, the Certified Vacancies in Kentucky School Districts list and the Minority Educator Job Bank, are now incorporated into KEPS. While providing racial/ethnic information is optional for job seekers, Thompson said he hopes that the new system will help districts identify and attract minority candidates.

For more information about KEPS, check the Web site or contact Darryl Thompson in the Department of Education’s Division of Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 564-1479 or dthompso@kde.state.ky.us.

I was a confirmed ‘solo act’ in my classroom

By Doneta Williams
English Teacher
Henderson County High School

If I had known what it was, I would have said “no” – and I would have missed the greatest opportunity of my teaching career.

I had been teaching high school English for four years when a young teacher I did not know well approached me and asked if I would consider teaching a collaborative class with her. I agreed because she was nice and it sounded professional and I was willing to try new things. I had no idea what I was getting into.

During preparations for the next school year, Tasha Young, the young teacher and now my collaboration partner, approached me to discuss “our” students and what we would be doing in class. It turned out she was certified in special education. What had been “my” class would now include students with IEPs (individual educational plans), and Tasha would be with me in the classroom every day.

What to do with this “extra” teacher concerned me. Was I sacrificing my curriculum and classroom management? Who would be the teacher in charge, and who would be the aide?

Thank goodness special education teachers understand what collaborative classes are. Tasha and I planned and discussed and taught, and over the months we formed a bond with each other and with our students. We planned lessons and how to modify them. We planned units so that each day touched on different skills and teaching methods. We planned how to form groups and divide classroom activities and teacher instruction so that we both contributed.

I soon realized, though, that few other teachers understood what we were doing and that all teachers could benefit from this teaching experience.

How It Works

Tasha Young and I bumbled through our first collaborative year, sharing ideas and working through the details. In our third year together, we signed up for a workshop on collaborative classrooms and quickly realized we had already stumbled upon most of the strategies offered at that session. Still, it was reassuring to learn that we were on the right path and that this process was valued among colleagues and experts.

What we confirmed was that collaborative teaching works best under the following conditions:

- Take a true team approach. One teacher is not “in charge” while the other “helps.” Both teachers “teach” and trade back and forth when dealing with each others’ specialties. Tasha loves “Beowulf,” and I get en-

thusiastic about “King Arthur.” So we each take charge in our particular strengths and take a back seat on occasion. It is an excellent exercise in perspective and maintains a level of enthusiasm that few teachers can manage alone.

- Avoid behaviors that distinguish IEP students from the others. Keep the group mixed, and make a point of individually helping all students (not just those with IEPs) as needed. When necessary, offer a strategy or review session for a group that includes all students who are performing lower than the class average. Consider using with the whole class many of the test modifications, reading strategies and study tools frequently used with IEP students. This practice is not “dumbing down” the curriculum but using research-based methods that

touch on all different learning styles and the latest brain research.

- Stick together. A team that teaches together longer than one year learns more about each others’ teaching strategies and materials and curriculum. This makes the partnership stronger and more natural. It also makes it more difficult for the students to play pranks or leverage one teacher against the other. Eventually, two collaborating teachers may grow together to the point that they finish each other’s sentences and lectures, as Tasha and I do.

- Make every task a combined effort. Tag-team discipline and grading is a perk for all teachers. Our students give up quickly on distracting behaviors because, as they say, “One or the other of you sees everything we do!” Sometimes I grade an entire assignment for the class; sometimes Tasha does; and sometimes we separate a stack of papers, especially writing assessments. We both grade performance projects and average our grades together.

- Plan together. This works best with common planning time but can be managed outside the school day by devoted professionals. It is ideal to have this time set aside daily. Collaborative teachers need it, and it allows for conferencing with each other and brainstorming that boosts the overall level of the entire course.

How We Know It Works

Tasha and I have been conducting this “experiment” for seven years. We have taught sophomores, juniors and seniors two classes per year. We have seen each other through the birth of three children, and another is on the way. Over time we have grown and modified our curriculum and teaching philosophies and become the best of friends. That was an unexpected perk.

Data from the past three years show success, and our students have told us that collaboration works. Out

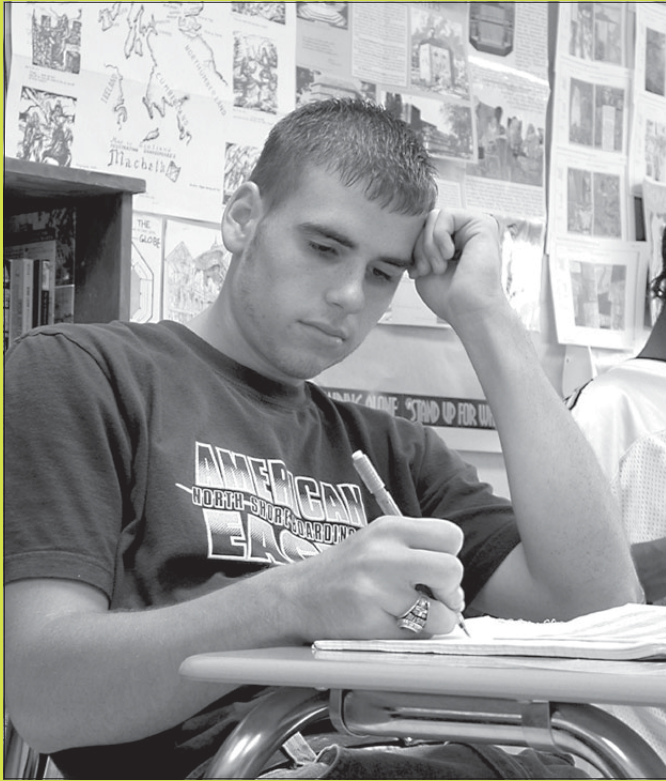


Photo by Rick McComb

Austin Pruitt works on a writing assignment in the Henderson County High School classroom of collaborating teachers Doneta Williams and Tasha Young.

...now I'm collaborative teaching's biggest fan

of 118 students (39 with IEPs) in five senior classes, eight students (two with IEPs) quit school and only nine (three with IEPs) made failing grades. Of those 17 students who were not successful, all had excessive absentee problems. A 7 percent total failure rate for 118 students may not sound impressive to some. However, these have been the traditional “at-risk” students from both the regular and special education populations, and they had a long history of academic struggle before they reached a senior English class.

We were surprised at how few students failed our class. I had experienced higher failure rates when I taught “solo.” This data could be easily manipulated, and I have heard teachers whisper about “giving grades” in some classes. But our reputation for being among the most challenging teachers (some use stronger language) in our school seems to validate that Tasha and I are not lowering our standards to achieve positive statistics.

The truest measure of our performance lies in the comments and follow-up success of our students. I cannot count the number of times that our students have come back to tell us that they made it through our class just because Tasha and I “never let up” and because one or the other of us was watching, reminding, prompting or helping them all of the time. This has proven particularly successful during these times of senior portfolios. We have had no incomplete portfolios over the past three years, and it is now an annual challenge to lead our students to fewer and fewer novice portfolios. We have been thrilled to see our scores rise each year and more of our IEP students achieving apprentice ratings and several approaching proficient. We pride ourselves on never having incomplete or blank portfolios.

Challenges

Our school has provided collaboration opportunities in most core subject areas. While challenged by staffing, funding and student population variables, Henderson County High is committed to offering as many collaboration opportunities as can be managed. Funding is becoming a greater issue every day, and continuation of these programs as full collaboration units becomes a bigger question mark each year.

Recently, our school scaled back from collaboration to consultation in some areas. This involves teacher “sharing” between more classes. Cary Conley, a science teacher who favors collaboration, says consultation loses many of the benefits he has found in collaboration.

Staff turnover results in fewer teachers staying together over a period of time to develop the relationship and comfort with the curriculum that make collaboration so beneficial. Darrell Daigle, a unit principal at Henderson County High, said it is a constant challenge for administrators to preserve collaboration throughout the scheduling process. While districts must maintain services to students with IEPs, how it is done varies from place to place. Our preference is for collaboration, and it requires more staff and scheduling considerations than are necessary with some other modifications.

Why I Continue

Most of the reasons for choosing to teach collaboration classes are probably obvious at this point. However, there are some reasons that are more subtle and even more convincing. While many of my peers compete over honors classes, I find pleasure in the dynamics of team teaching. It is more rewarding professionally to have a partner in class every day.

The measure of our success is visible every day. The class that enters



Photo by Rick McComb

Henderson County High School student Mindy Dossett receives guidance from teachers Tasha Young (left) and Doneta Williams (right) as she selects a book from a list of classics. Young, a special education teacher, and Williams, an English teacher, team up to plan the most effective educational strategies for all of their students.

our room at the beginning of a semester is a far different personality from the one that leaves at the end. Students who profess to hate English leave with kind words and return for visits. Tangible results like those are extraordinarily satisfying for an experienced English teacher. I enjoy my professional relationship with my collaborating teacher, and those positive feelings carry over to the students who are cared about twice as much and who receive the benefit of twice the ideas and twice the attention and educational training.

However, the greatest incentive is the growth I have experienced personally. New doors open daily through my increased knowledge of special education issues. My repertoire of teaching and testing techniques has been vastly increased and improved through my exposure to an entirely different educational process than the one I studied in college. I have more “tools” for helping struggling students. Increased conferencing, experience with modifications, varying perspectives and the variety of students to work with are positives for students, teachers and administrators.

I now sit in on ARC (Admissions and Release Committee) meetings, and I understand and help in the decision-

making process. I serve on committees that deal with special education referrals. While more committee work sounds like a drawback to most teachers, these are places where many more “regular education” teachers are needed, and I can make a significant difference in the quality of education for all of the students in my school.

It is amazing how the best opportunities sometimes fall into our laps when we least expect them. I urge you not to wait for that kind of luck. Seek out an interesting special education teacher in your school. Talk to your administration about collaborative teaching. Collaboration can help students, prevent teacher burnout, and increase cooperation and dialogue among people from different areas of expertise. It works best among open-minded individuals who choose to work together rather than being assigned.

The benefits are double what you might expect.

To get more information, contact Doneta Williams or Tasha Young at Henderson County High School by phone at (270) 831-8800 or by e-mail at dwilliams@henderson.k12.ky.us or tyoung@henderson.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

In this math class, you can hear students think!

By Joy Barr
Kentucky Department of Education

Mathematics is more than $x + y = z$ for 8th-graders in Stephanie Fields' classroom at Noe Middle School in Jefferson County. These students "think aloud" to learn and practice critical thinking skills as they solve equations.

During daily warm-up activities, students talk through their thinking processes, using an overhead projector to show other students how they arrive at their conclusions.

"It is important to me that students feel comfortable enough to communicate in my classroom," Fields said. "Students need an atmosphere that allows them to question and reflect with each other and with me. They must feel comfortable making mistakes, asking questions, finding different ways to solve problems and recognizing that there is no one right way to 'do' mathematics."

Fields aligns her curriculum with the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools." Her students focus on concepts they need for success now and beyond the 8th grade – concepts that include discovery lessons, peer group exploration, individual reflection and real-world connections.

By using mathematics manipulatives in the classroom, Fields engages students and gives them a physical model of why or how mathematics works. This helps students discover and understand important concepts.

"Incorporating different teaching strategies and recognizing different learning styles gives all students the opportunity to become interested in mathematics, feel successful, gain more confidence and want to learn more," Fields said.

Through individual and group investigations, students explore concepts discussed in class in relation to problem solving situations. "From



Photo by Rick McComb

Teacher Stephanie Fields enjoys hearing what students have to say at Noe Middle School in Jefferson County. Fields, a recent recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching, encourages students to "think aloud" and practice critical thinking skills as they solve equations.

day one, I model the kind of thinking I want students to use. I question, reflect, guess, wonder and decide out loud regularly," Fields said. "Likewise, I encourage my students

to think out loud. Not only is the ability to discuss mathematics important, it is equally important for them to write effectively about mathematics."

Kathy Sayre, the principal at Noe Middle, said Fields has high expectations for her students, who in turn have high expectations of themselves. "The students respond well to the challenge in her classroom," Sayre said. "[Fields] very deliberately makes sure that students understand mathematics concepts."

Fields is one of four Kentucky teachers who received the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching for 2001. This is the nation's highest recognition for teaching in these content areas. It is administered by the National Science Foundation.

For information about the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, call mathematics consultant Ann Bartosh or science consultant Jackie Hensley at (502) 564-2106; or send e-mail to them at abartosh@kde.state.ky.us or jhensley@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

Showcases will preview new math materials

The Department of Education invites educators, parents and future teachers to a series of one-day showcases presenting state-adopted and supplementary P-12 printed and electronic resources in mathematics.

The showcase schedule will run from December 2002 through January 2003. In the case of inclement weather, some sessions may be rescheduled.

Dates and locations are posted on the department's Web site. Go to www.kentuckyschools.org and click on "What's New" at the bottom of the page.

For additional information, contact Martha Francis by phone at (502) 564-3678, by fax at (502) 564-6952 or by e-mail at mfrancis@kde.state.ky.us.

Lane updates ‘Next’ magazine for Kentucky high-schoolers

The publishers of Lexington-based business magazine “The Lane Report” has published a second edition of “Next,” a magazine about the wide range of options available to Kentucky students after high school graduation.

Articles in the 2002-2003 issue cover important choices such as finding a job, buying a car, staying away from drugs and going to college. This full-color publication includes a directory of Kentucky colleges, universities and information about financial aid and scholarships.

Among NEXT’s corporate underwriters this year are Ashland Inc., Toyota, the Kentucky Lottery Corp., the Student Loan People, LG&E/KU, the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association and UPS.

The publisher plans to deliver copies to students in every Kentucky high school in the first week of December.

For additional information about “Next” or this project, contact Lane Communications Group at (859) 244-3522 or editorial@lanereport.com.



KET to host e-trip to the forest

A simple hike through the woods turns into a learning experience when three teenagers meet up with a forester in a new KET instructional television series, “Electronic Field Trip to the Forest.”

KET will air the series of three 20-minute programs in an hour-long block on Nov. 27 at 10 a.m. ET (9 a.m. CT) on KET Star Channel 703. (The series will repeat at the same times on Dec. 2 and March 24.)

The series, designed for grades 4-8, includes lessons in environmental and life science, history, geography and economics (Kentucky Academic Expectations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.18, 2.20, 2.33, 2.36). Specific topics include the historical uses of Kentucky forests; the decline and reintroduction of the American chestnut; the forest as a system; flora and fauna; factors that threaten the health of the forests; the value of the forest as a habitat, watershed, source of products and careers; and forest management.

A series-related Web site includes print resources, an online habitat game and links to relevant Web sites. A comprehensive set of curriculum units of study will soon be available on the site (www.ket.org:80/itvvideos/offering/fieldtrips/forest.htm).

“Electronic Field Trip to the Forest” is a production of KET, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service, the Kentucky Division of Forestry, the Kentucky Department of Education and other partners. Schools have unlimited rights to record and use the series.

For information about recording KET instructional television programs, contact your school’s library media specialist or call KET at (800) 432-0951.

Environmental summit offers chance to explore

High school students will have opportunities to explore community planning and growth and how it can foster economic development and ensure a clean environment for Kentucky as they prepare for the Youth Environmental Summit on Community Growth and Planning. The event is scheduled for May 13, 2003.

Sponsors of the event are providing training and free curricula to high school teachers who want to prepare students for the summit. Plans are to cover most, if not all, of the costs of student and teacher participation, said Jane Eller, executive director of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council.

Teacher workshops on this year’s topic, visual pollution, will be held in January 2003. For more information, call the Kentucky Environmental Education Council at (800) 882-5271.

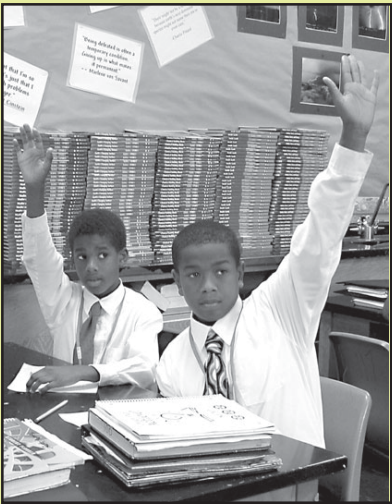
Contest celebrates 100 years of flight

To celebrate the Wright brothers’ first flight in 1903, the Aviation Museum of Kentucky will sponsor “Centennial of Flight 2003,” an essay and art competition for P-12 students. The competition asks students to reflect on how the short flight in Kitty Hawk, N.C., shaped the world.

Students may enter between Dec. 1, 2002, and May 1, 2003. Winners will receive prizes and recognition periodically during this six-month period.

Essays must be no more than 1,000 words. Art entries may be paintings, drawings or sculptures. All entries will be on display in the museum for one year. The museum hosts 20,000 visitors annually.

The museum staff is available to collaborate with teachers on participation and entry ideas. For details or assistance, visit www.aviationky.org/ or contact Steve Parker at (859) 231-1219 or sparker@aviationky.org.



All Dressed Up and Going Places!

Benjamin Jones and Jami Mays were dressed for success and eager to share their knowledge with classmates during a recent class at Paducah Middle School. Now that the school offers single-sex classes (see *Kentucky Teacher*, August 2002), the 6th-grade boys have decided to take things one step farther. Many are opting to wear business attire on “Building Pride” Wednesdays.

The boys earn three bonus points each day they participate. They can wear their own dress shirts and ties or borrow them from a supply on hand at the school.

A parent, Jerry Ladd, volunteered his time on those first Wednesday mornings to show the boys how to tie their ties. Principal George Radford says he has tied a few extra ties on Wednesdays, too.

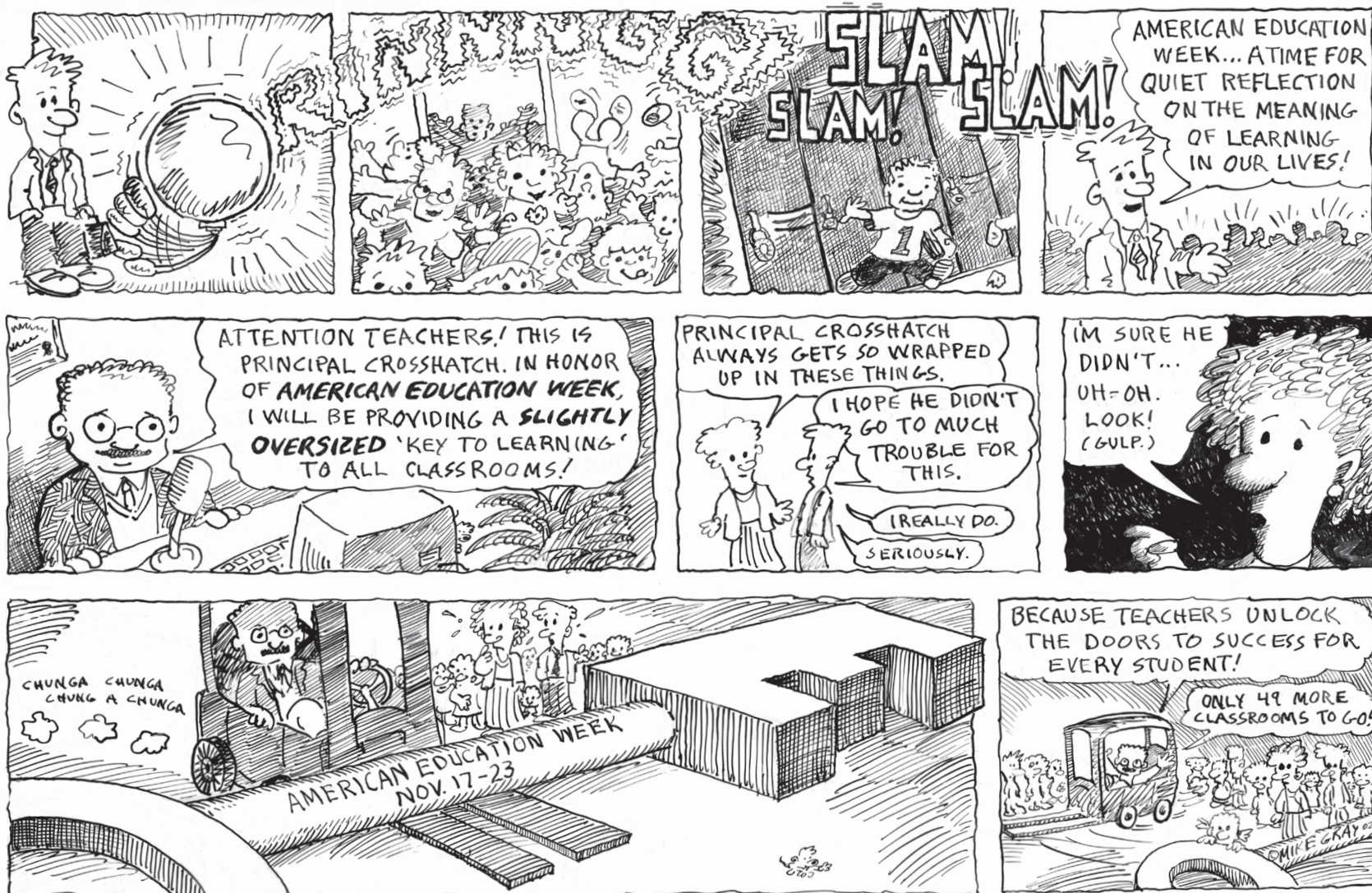
Radford said the boys’ behavior improves on “Building Pride” days. “They’re carrying themselves like gentlemen, and their work ethic is improving,” he said. Students report that dressing up makes them feel more confident about their abilities and potential.

What’s next? Possibly lessons in business and social etiquette.

For more photos and details, visit the Web at www.paducah.k12.ky.us/content.asp?Content=Paducah+Middle.

TEACHER'S LOUNGE

By Michael Gray



Talk to us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

E-mail kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us

Phone (502) 564-3421 or (800) 533-5372
(toll free in Kentucky)

Fax (502) 564-6470

Write Kentucky Teacher
1914 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero Street.
Frankfort, KY 40601

Free lessons teach students about the Battle of Perryville

A new, online lesson series for the 4th-grade curriculum offers 10 weeklong lessons that cover the Civil War, the Civil War presence in Kentucky and the importance of the Battle of Perryville. Many historians consider the battle a decisive turning point in the war and a direct reason President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

Included in each week's plans are essays on the history of the subject, lesson outlines with discussion questions and suggested activities, and resources for additional information.

This online resource, sponsored by Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in partnership with the Perryville Enhancement Project, is available free of charge at www.perryville.net (click "Download Lesson Plans"). For more information, contact Stuart Sanders, director of interpretation and education for the Perryville Enhancement Project, at P.O. Box 65, Perryville, KY 40468; (888) 332-1865; or swsanders@perryville.net.

Bulletin Board

By Joy Barr
Kentucky Department of Education

Nov. 17-23 is American Education Week

Sponsor: National Education Association
Theme: “Making Public Schools Great for Every Child”
Information: www.nea.org/aew/

Arts and humanities materials available for middle and high school teachers

Thanks to a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women, middle and high school teachers may obtain free copies of “Women of the 15th State,” a collection of Nancy Gall-Clayton’s eight short plays about women in Kentucky history. To stretch grant funds, one teacher at each school may request one complete, unbound copy, which can be reproduced and used without royalty. Teachers and students can use the plays in many ways, including reading aloud, acting, and as a basis for research and discussion.

For information, visit www.nancygallclayton.net (click on “Monologues and Shorts”) or send e-mail to nancygallclayton@earthlink.net.

Learn about Japan through Toyota International Teacher Program

The Toyota International Teacher Program will select a total of 50 teachers from seven states (including Kentucky) to go to Japan June 21-July 5, 2003, to learn about that country’s history, education, environment and technology and how they affect industry and society. Full-time secondary teachers with at least three years of teaching experience may apply by Jan. 13, 2003. Applications are available online at www.iie.org/pgms/toyota.

For more information or printed application forms, contact Toyota International Teacher Program, Institute of International Education, 1400 K St. NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005-2403; (877) 832-2487; toyotateach@iie.org.

Conference scheduled for educators of gifted students

The Kentucky Association of Gifted Educators has scheduled its 23rd annual conference for Feb. 27 and 28, 2003, at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington. The theme will be “Blueprint for Tomorrow – Gifted Education Today.”

Conference topics include curriculum differentiation, diversity, social-emotional issues, visual/performing arts, creativity and the administrator’s role in programs for gifted students.

For a conference brochure, call (270) 745-4301 or visit online at www.wku.edu/kage.

Lexington is site for English/language arts conference

The Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/Language Arts plans to hold its 67th annual conference Feb. 7 and 8, 2003, at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington. The theme for the conference will be “Voices of the Heart.” Several national speakers are scheduled.

The pre-registration deadline is Jan. 13. For complete details, visit online at www.kcte.org/conference or send e-mail to conference@kcte.org.

Art competition open to students ages 8 to 12

The International Child Art Foundation has organized an “Arts Olympiad” competition for students ages 8 to 12. Local and national competitions will culminate in an international children’s celebration in Washington, D.C. The goal for the competition is to prepare children for a creative and cooperative future. The theme is “Me in the New Millennium.” Students may submit paintings or drawings in any two-dimensional medium. The entry deadline is Dec. 31, 2002.

For details, call (202) 530-1000 or send e-mail to childart@icaf.org.

Teachers’ Professional Growth Fund dollars still available in some regions

Middle school teachers have been applying in large numbers for professional development dollars through the Teacher’s Professional Growth Fund. Regions 2 and 5 have reached the cap on the amount of money that can be allotted until March 30, 2003, and new applications from teachers in those regions will be placed on hold until that date. TPGF dollars are still available for teachers in the other six regions, and middle school teachers are encouraged to apply for funding for their individual, content-specific professional development opportunities.

For more information, go to www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/tpgf.

KVHS announces calendar for next two semesters

The Kentucky Virtual High School has announced the following dates for the next two semesters:

Spring 2003

- Registration Deadline: Jan. 16
- Classes Begin: Jan. 13
- Classes End: Feb. 28

Summer 2003

- Registration Deadline: June 19
- Classes Begin: June 16
- Classes End: July 11

For details, check www.kvhs.org or contact Bob Fortney at (866) 432-0008 (toll-free) or bfortney@kde.state.ky.us.

In this issue . . .

More tests in reading, math.....1

Revisiting Primary
Commissioner's Comments.....2

'Real primary' checklist.....3

'Good reads' for teachers4

New! Online 'job search' service.....5

Collaborative teaching's biggest fan.....6

Talking their way through math.....8

Teacher's Lounge10

Bulletin Board.....11



News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

Kentucky Teacher™

NOVEMBER 2002

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lexington, Kentucky
Permit No. 1

Kentucky Teacher™

NOVEMBER 2002

Back Page/Front Burner

Starting Points for Local Discussions
About National Education Issues

- **Respect for the Teaching Profession**

A new Carnegie Challenge Paper, “Teaching as a Clinical Profession: A New Challenge for Education,” summarizes the challenges facing the profession and offers a conceptual answer: treat teaching as a modern clinical profession.
www.carnegie.org/sub/pubs/jumppageteached.html

- **Digital Literacy**

Here’s a framework for assessing digital literacy (defined as a set of habits through which children use computer technology for learning, work, socializing, and fun) plus recommendations regarding ways to close the “digital divide” between children in middle- and low-income households.
www.bc.edu/research/intasc/jtla/journal/v1n4.shtml

- **Too Much Brown Food?**

With all that’s known about good nutrition, why do schools serve so much brown food (French fries, meatballs, hoagies, pepperoni pizza, cookies)? Where are the green veggies and yellow or orange fruits? One Cornell University researcher says the biggest obstacle to balanced nutrition in the schools is getting people to realize that food has an impact on learning.
www.philly.com/mld/philly/4024626.htm

- **The Politics of Homework**

Contemporary learning theory suggests that homework as conventionally organized is a poor way to advance student learning. However, says this report, homework reform is unlikely to take root until educators understand its limits and have clearer notions of how to organize schools and classrooms without extensive reliance on homework as we know it.
<http://teachers.net/gazette/SEP02/kralovec.html>

- **No Impossible Children**

National Education Association President Reg Weaver contrasts his idealism and realism about his hopes for public education: “I find tremendous power in the words: ‘I believe in you. I know that you can achieve.’ These days, so many young people are dying – literally dying – for lack of an adult to say that to them.” www.nea.org/columns/rw020922.html

Source: Public Education Network
www.publiceducation.org
All links accurate at press time

Kentucky Department of Education Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner
Visit the Kentucky Department of Education’s Web site: www.kentuckyschools.org